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Resolution 2391 (2017)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 8129th meeting, on 8 December 2017

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 2374 (2017), 2364 (2017) and 2359 (2017), as well as its press statement of 6 October 2017,

Recalling its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Affirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the countries of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G5 Sahel), namely Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger,

Expressing its deep concern regarding the transnational threat posed by terrorism and organized crime (including trafficking in persons, arms, drugs and natural resources, and the smuggling of migrants) in the Sahel region, and *strongly condemning* the continued attacks in the G5 Sahel States against civilians, representatives from local, regional and State institutions, as well as national, international and UN security forces,

Acknowledging the impact of the activities of terrorist organizations, including those benefiting from transnational organized crime, in the G5 Sahel States on regional and international peace and security,

Underscoring the primary responsibility of the G5 Sahel States to address these threats and challenges, as well as the importance for the international community to support African countries uniting their efforts at regional or subregional level to fight against terrorism and transnational organized crime with a view to restore peace and security, including through the protection of civilians,

Welcoming the continued determination of the G5 Sahel States to unite their efforts to address the impact of terrorism and transnational organized crime, including through the establishment of a joint force conducting cross-border joint military counter-terrorist operations (*Force conjointe du G5 Sahel* — "FC-G5S"), whose deployment has been authorized by the African Union Peace and Security Council communiqué of 13 April 2017 and welcomed by United Nations Security Council resolution 2359 (2017),

Noting with satisfaction the reaffirmation of the commitment of G5 Sahel States to fully operationalize the FC-G5S, repeatedly expressed during the Summit in

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Bamako of 2 July 2017, the High-level meeting in New-York on 18 September 2017, the mission of the Security Council to the Sahel region from 19 to 22 October through visits to Mali, Mauritania and Burkina Faso, as well as the ministerial briefing of the Security Council on 30 October 2017,

Recalling that the G5 Sahel States have the responsibility to provide the FC-G5S with adequate resources, *encouraging* additional support from bilateral and multilateral partners, including through the provision of adequate logistical, operational and financial assistance to the FC-G5S, as appropriate, *stressing* that secure funding and support for the FC-G5S will make a critical contribution to a lasting stabilization of the Sahel region, and *noting* the complementarity that bilateral and multilateral support can play in addressing the needs of the FC-G5S comprehensively and in the most efficient way,

Welcoming the commitments made to date by several donors to provide support to the FC-G5S, including Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, the European Union, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey and the United States of America,

Welcoming the efforts of the French forces to support the operations of the FC-G5S,

Commending the contribution of bilateral and multilateral partners to strengthen security capacities in the Sahel region, notably the role of the European Union missions (EU Training Mission in Mali — EUTM Mali, EU Capacity Building Mission in Mali — EUCAP Sahel Mali, and EU Capacity Building Mission in Niger — EUCAP Sahel Niger) in providing training and strategic advice to national security forces in the Sahel region,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the G5 Sahel joint force of 16 October 2017 (S/2017/869), including its outline of a range of possible options for United Nations support to the FC-G5S, and *noting* that this report was warmly welcomed by G5 Sahel States,

Recalling the mission it carried out to the Sahel region from 19 to 22 October, through visits to Mali, Mauritania and Burkina Faso, with the main objectives to assess the situation in the G5 Sahel States as well as to discuss the observations and recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General mentioned above,

Recognizing that the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and the FC-G5S have the potential to be mutually beneficial instruments to restore peace and stability in Mali and in the Sahel region, and *underlining* that they have the potential to constitute a positive interaction between a United Nations peacekeeping operation and an African operation,

Reiterating its serious concern at the continuing lack of key capabilities for MINUSMA, and *urging* Member States to provide the necessary capacities, including troops and police that have adequate capabilities, pre-deployment and, where appropriate, in situ training and equipment, including enablers, specific to the operating environment, in order for MINUSMA to continue to make progress in the implementation of its mandate, pursuant to resolution 2364 (2017), including through the achievement of its more proactive and robust posture,

Underlining that lasting peace and security in the Sahel region will not be achieved without full, effective and inclusive implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali ("the Agreement"), and *stressing* that all parties to the Agreement share the primary responsibility to make steadfast progress in its implementation,

Underlining that all efforts to counter terrorism in Mali and in the Sahel region should be complementary to ongoing political processes, including the full, effective and inclusive implementation of the Agreement,

Stressing that a military response to the threats faced by G5 Sahel States can only be effective if conducted in full compliance with international law, by taking active steps to minimize the risk of harm to civilians in all areas of operation, as well as if accompanied by the rapid and effective implementation of inclusive regional strategies encompassing security, governance, development, human rights and humanitarian issues,

Emphasizing the important role of women in prevention and resolution of conflicts, in peacebuilding as well as in post-conflict situations, as recognized in the relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution 1325 (2000) and resolution 2242 (2015),

Noting that the activities of terrorist organizations, including those benefiting from transnational organized crime, in the Sahel region constitute a threat to international peace and security,

Operationalization and status of the FC-G5S

1. *Welcomes* the steady and rapid progress achieved in the operationalization of the FC-G5S, including through the fulfilment of the initial operational capacity of the joint force on 17 October 2017, and *takes positive note* of its first operation "Hawbi", which took place on the Center boundary zone;

2. *Commends* the G5 Sahel States for their sustained efforts towards the full and effective operationalization of the FC-G5S, and *encourages* them to continue to take appropriate measures in order for the FC-G5S to reach its full operational capacity by the announced timeframe of March 2018;

3. *Recalls* that the deployment of the FC-G5S throughout the territories of its contributing countries, with up to 5,000 military, civilian and police personnel, with a view to restoring peace and security in the Sahel region, is authorized by a decision of the African Union Peace and Security Council for an initial period of 12 months starting from 13 April 2017;

Groupe de soutien

4. *Notes* that the *Groupe de Soutien* referred to in the strategic concept of operations of the FC-G5S ("the *Groupe de Soutien*") represents a useful and appropriate platform to exchange views on the operationalization of the FC-G5S, the mobilization and coordination of international support, further clarification of its strategic objectives and concept of operations as well as the implementation of comprehensive strategies encompassing security, governance, development, human rights and humanitarian issues;

5. *Encourages* the G5 Sahel States to clarify the format and modalities of work of the *Groupe de Soutien*, which is due to involve key regional and international actors supporting the FC-G5S, and meet alternatively at technical and political level;

6. *Calls upon* the G5 Sahel rotating presidency to convene on a regular basis meetings of the *Groupe de Soutien*, in order to continue to ensure full and effective integration of the FC-G5S in its regional and international environment as well as the efficient coordination of the international support to the FC-G5S;

Coordination of international support

7. *Welcomes* the central role played by the G5 Sahel, supported by the European Union and its member States notably through the "coordination hub" mechanism, and in close coordination with the United Nations and the African Union, in identifying the needs of the FC-G5S and coordinating the bilateral contributions of the donors;

8. *Notes* the positive role of the Permanent Secretariat of the G5 Sahel to support the cooperation of G5 Sahel States in the field of security, governance and development, and *requests* the Secretary-General, through UNOWAS, to provide technical assistance, within existing mandate and resources, to the Permanent Secretariat of the G5 Sahel in order to achieve this task;

Bilateral support

9. *Welcomes* the commitments made by the G5 Sahel States and several donors to provide support to the FC-G5S, which amount to a total of more than 177 million euros up to date, and *notes with satisfaction* the steps already taken to fulfil some of these commitments;

10. *Notes with appreciation* the proposal made by the European Union, with the support of the G5 Sahel States, that its African Peace Facility serves as a mechanism for channelling international voluntary contributions in support of the FC-G5S, in close coordination with other contributions;

11. *Welcomes* the intent of the current chairmanship of the G5 Sahel, the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union to co-host an international pledging conference in support of the FC-G5S in Brussels, and *encourages* all international and regional partners to seize this occasion to commit to provide bilateral assistance to the FC-G5S;

United Nations support

12. *Stresses* that the efforts of the FC-G5S to counter the activities of terrorist groups and other organized criminal groups will contribute to create a more secure environment in the Sahel region, and thus facilitate the fulfilment by MINUSMA of its mandate to stabilize Mali, and *further stresses* that operational and logistical support from MINUSMA, as outlined in paragraph 13 below, has the potential to allow the FC-G5S, given its current level of capacities, to enhance its ability to deliver on its mandate;

13. *Requests* in this context the Secretary-General to take appropriate steps to conclude as soon as possible a technical agreement between the United Nations, the European Union and G5 Sahel States, with a view to providing specified operational and logistical support through MINUSMA to the FC-G5S ("the technical agreement"), and that the support provided pursuant to the technical agreement should:

(a) apply to G5 Sahel States defence and security forces only when operating on Malian territory in the framework of the joint force,

(b) comprise MEDEVAC and CASEVAC, access to life support consumables (fuel, water and rations) and use of UN engineering plant equipment and material, as well as uniformed MINUSMA engineering enabling units to assist in preparation of FC-G5S operational bases in Mali,

(c) be subject to full financial reimbursement to the United Nations, through an EU-coordinated financing mechanism established for the coordination of international voluntary contributions to support the FC-G5S,

(d) be conducted at the discretion of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and Head of MINUSMA, in close consultation with the Force Commander, and without affecting MINUSMA's capacity to implement its mandate and strategic priorities, and be restricted to the areas of operations of MINUSMA where such support is compatible with its current level of capacities;

14. *Encourages* the technical agreement to constitute a temporary measure towards full self-sufficiency of the FC-G5S, and *emphasizes* that MINUSMA's support arrangements, including MEDEVAC and CASEVAC, engineering capability as well as logistical supply chains, should not be adjusted to facilitate support to the FC-G5S if such an adjustment would adversely impact its own operations or put mission personnel at undue risk;

15. *Recommends* that the Secretary-General periodically reviews the implementation of the technical agreement, with a particular focus on operationalization of the FC-G5S;

16. *Calls upon* MINUSMA and the FC-G5S to continue to ensure adequate coordination and exchange of information, through relevant mechanisms, of their operations, within their respective mandates, and *reiterates* in this regard its request to the Secretary-General to enhance cooperation between MINUSMA and the G5 Sahel Members States through provision of relevant intelligence and liaison officers from the G5 Sahel Members States to MINUSMA;

Obligations under international law and human rights policy

17. *Underlines* the need for the operations of the FC-G5S to be conducted in full compliance with international law, including international humanitarian law, international human rights law and international refugee law, as applicable, and for G5 Sahel States and the FC-G5S to take active steps to minimize the risk of harm to civilians in all areas of operation as well as to ensure accountability and transfer to criminal justice of those apprehended during operations and suspected of terrorist and related crimes;

18. *Underlines* that a gender perspective should be taken into account in implementing all aspects of the strategic concept of operations of the FC-G5S, including by ensuring that gender analysis and women's participation are integrated into assessments, planning and operations;

19. *Underlines* the need for the G5 Sahel States to take into account the association of children with terrorist and transnational organized criminal groups to protect and consider as victims children who have been released or otherwise separated from those groups and to pay particular attention to the protection, release and reintegration of all children associated with those groups;

20. *Welcomes* the African Union's zero tolerance stance on sexual exploitation and abuse, and *underlines* the need for the G5 Sahel States to take adequate measures to prevent and combat impunity for sexual exploitation and abuse by their personnel operating in the framework of the FC-G5S;

21. *Calls upon* the G5 Sahel States to ensure the highest standards of transparency, conduct and discipline for their contingents operating in the framework of the FC-G5S, to establish a robust compliance framework to prevent, investigate, address and publicly report violations and abuses of human rights law and violations

of international humanitarian law related to the FC-G5S ("the compliance framework");

22. *Calls upon* regional and international partners to support, through voluntary contributions, technical assistance and advice, G5 Sahel States' efforts in the establishment and implementation of the compliance framework by the G5 Sahel States and the FC-G5S, and *encourages* all relevant partners, including United Nations relevant entities, EUTM, EUCAP, the French forces, within the framework of their respective mandates and existing resources, to support the implementation of the compliance framework and to ensure close coordination of their activities in this regard;

23. *Notes* that the Secretary-General will ensure that any support provided to non-United Nations security forces is provided in strict compliance with the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on United Nations support to Non-United Nations security forces (HRDDP), and *calls upon* the FC-G5S to cooperate with the United Nations in implementing the HRDDP, including by ensuring that the relevant monitoring and reporting mechanisms are in place and functional;

Implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali

24. *Expresses* its deep concern over the persistent delays in the full implementation of key provisions of the Agreement;

25. *Renews its urgent call* to the Government of Mali and the *Plateforme* and *Coordination* armed groups, as expressed during its meeting with the members of the *Comité de suivi de l'accord* in Bamako on 21 October 2017, to take immediate and concrete action to fully and expeditiously deliver on their remaining obligations under the Agreement, in particular through:

(a) the operationalization of the interim administrations in the North of Mali,

(b) the establishment of the Operational Coordination Mechanism in Kidal and Timbuktu,

(c) progress in the cantonment and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes, including through the definition of adequate eligibility criteria and the submission of finalized lists of candidates, as well as progress in the security sector reform, with a view to achieve the progressive redeployment of the reconstituted armed and security forces in Mali,

(d) progress in the decentralization process,

(e) ensuring full and equal women's participation;

26. *Welcomes* the appointment of the Carter Center as the Independent Observer referred to in the Agreement, *recalls* that the mandate of the Independent Observer, as defined by the Agreement, is to objectively evaluate progress towards implementation of the Agreement, including through the release every 4 months of a comprehensive report on the implementation of the commitments undertaken in the Agreement, identifying any impediments, determining responsibility and recommending the steps to be taken, and *calls upon* all parties to fully cooperate with the Carter Center in order to facilitate the implementation of its mandate as Independent Observer;

27. *Underlines* that engaging in hostilities in violation of the Agreement as well as actions taken that obstruct, or that obstruct by prolonged delay, or that threaten the implementation of the Agreement constitute a basis for sanctions designations pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017), among other designation criteria;

28. *Calls on* all members of the *Comité de suivi de l'Accord* and other relevant international partners to sustain their support to the implementation of the Agreement;

Development and governance efforts

29. *Reaffirms* the centrality of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel (UNISS) in providing a comprehensive framework to strengthen governance, security and development in the Sahel region;

30. *Welcomes* the efforts of the Secretary-General to give renewed impetus to the implementation of the UNISS through the establishment of the Executive Committee Working Group on the Sahel chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General, with a view to ensuring better coordination and efficiency of the international response to the needs of the people and communities of the Sahel region, through the identification of key priorities and objectives, and *calls upon* donors to mobilize their efforts and align their activities on these key priorities and objectives;

31. *Welcomes* the mobilization of key donors to promote innovative approaches to support development efforts in the Sahel, including through the launch of the "Alliance for the Sahel", in close coordination with the United Nations;

32. *Calls upon* G5 Sahel States to ensure women's full and equal participation in institutions and mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts, as well as to include a gender perspective in the development of comprehensive strategies to counter the threat posed by terrorism and organized crime (including trafficking in persons, arms, drugs and natural resources, and the smuggling of migrants) in the Sahel region;

Reporting and follow-up

33. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in close coordination with the G5 Sahel States and the African Union, to report to the Security Council on the activities of the FC-G5S, five months after the adoption of this resolution and then every six months, focusing:

(i) on progress in the operationalization of the FC-G5S;

(ii) on international support granted to the FC-G5S and possible measures to enhance its efficiency;

(iii) on implementation of the technical agreement, including through a detailed outline of the support provided by MINUSMA to the FC-G5S, an assessment of its potential impact on MINUSMA as well as the provision of benchmarks to indicate the level of operationalization of the FC-G5S at which MINUSMA's logistical and operational support may be gradually withdrawn;

(iv) on challenges encountered by the FC-G5S and possible measures for further consideration;

(v) on implementation by the G5 Sahel States of the compliance framework, the HRDDP, as well as on ways to mitigate any adverse impact of the military operations of the FC-G5S on the civilian population, including on women and children;

34. *Expresses* its intent to periodically review the deployment of the FC-G5S, on the basis of the reports of the Secretary-General;

35. *Decides* that the reports of the Secretary-General mentioned in paragraph 33 above constitute an alternative to the different lines of reporting on the FC-G5S requested by paragraph 7 of resolution 2359 (2017), which shall no longer be in force;

36. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.